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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GR](#)  
SUBJECT: U/S BURNS' JUNE 11 MEETING WITH GREEK OPPOSITION  
LEADER PAPANDREOU

Classified By: CHARGE TOM COUNTRYMAN. REASON: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: In a June 11 meeting with U/S Burns, opposition PASOK leader (and former Foreign Minister) George Papandreou suggested that Kosovo's transition from supervised to full independence should take effect once it became an EU member. That would cement the EU's commitment to the region, as well as facilitate a solution. Burns updated Papandreou on the status of negotiations, underscoring that, for the U.S., independence for Kosovo was essential. Burns counseled patience on the Macedonia issue, pointing out that NATO's decision on enlargement would not take place for months. Burns reminded Papandreou of the importance of NATO efforts in Afghanistan, underscoring that Greece could and should contribute more. END SUMMARY.

PAPANDREOU: FULL KOSOVO INDEPENDENCE WHEN IT ENTERS THE EU

¶2. (C) Papandreou told Burns that Kosovo was a European problem, and should be handled in that context. While the EU's current "enlargement-phobia" had dragged the Western Balkans into a "gray zone," the EU accession process was essential to resolving local and regional issues. Papandreou proposed offering Kosovo "some status" now, with full independence "consummated" the day it became an EU member. Current proposals for "supervised independence" could be made "more supervised." Papandreou believed that Tadic had the capacity to reach a solution; Papandreou's contacts told him Tadic "wanted to end this." By contrast, Papandreou thought Kostunica was trying to straddle the fence.

¶3. (C) Burns told Papandreou that, in our view, independence for Kosovo was essential. Without that, there was real potential for violence. He reviewed recent developments, including the Ahtisaari plan, Russia's isolation in objecting to it, and the U.S. commitment to find one way or another to ensure Kosovo's independence. Burns also highlighted the need for the international community to reach out to Serbia and how fists would demonstrate a future in Europe.

¶4. (C) Papandreou suggested that the EU more ethnic differences would be "submerged." Burns pointed out that Greece could be helpful with Belgrade, given its strong bilateral ties. Papandreou suggested an EU conference (with U.S. participation, as well as all Balkan countries) to discuss its commitments in the region. That could provide a roadmap for the future of the Balkans, keeping the EU involved and committed.

MACEDONIA NATO ENTRY AND THE "NAME ISSUE"

¶5. (C) On the question of Macedonia's NATO entry and the "name issue," Papandreou stressed he did not want this to become a pre-election issue (which would mean a return to the rhetoric of the early 90s). At the same time, an agreed name needed to be found that could be used internationally. Even

a "composite name" would be difficult. Only strengthening bilateral ties would lead to a resolution. Burns reminded Papandreou that NATO's decision on expansion would not take place until early 2008; that was the time to deal with the question of Macedonia's NATO entry. Burns encouraged Papandreou to keep the rhetoric low-key and work with UN mediator Nimetz.

#### GREEK CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFGHANISTAN

16. (C) Burns stressed that, in Afghanistan, all NATO members needed to do more. A key problem was lack of training for the Afghan national army; another key issue was effective coordination of military presence with humanitarian assistance. Burns told Papandreou that Greece was one of the countries with excess capacity that could and should contribute more. Papandreou agreed on the importance of Afghanistan but offered no specific ideas.

#### COUNTRYMAN